

Serial No. 10/014,509
Docket No. 383684/00

7

REMARKS

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the Examiner's helpful comments that he provided to Applicant at the personal interview conducted on December 6, 2006. At the interview, the parties discussed the pending claims including claim 4, and the references including Fukumoto which Applicant pointed out has a U. S. filing date that is after the foreign priority date of the present Application and thus, may be overcome by filing a verified translation of the priority document for the present Application.

Claims 4, 7-8, 11-13, 15, 18 and 21-31 are all the claims presently pending in the application. Claim 4 has been amended to more clearly define the claimed invention.

It is noted that the claim amendments are made only for more particularly pointing out the invention, and not for distinguishing the invention over the prior art, narrowing the claims or for any statutory requirements of patentability. Further, Applicant specifically states that no amendment to any claim herein should be construed as a disclaimer of any interest in or right to an equivalent of any element or feature of the amended claim.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the Examiner's indication that claims 7-8, 11-13 and 24-25 are allowed. However, Applicant respectfully submits that all of the claims are in condition for immediate allowance.

Applicant notes that claim 4 has been amended to replace "substantially symmetrical shape" with "symmetrical shape".

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that claims 4, 7-8, 11-13, 15, 18 and 21-27, all the claims presently pending in the application, are patentably distinct over the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to pass the above application to issue at the earliest possible time.

Should the Examiner find the application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary in a telephonic or personal interview.

Serial No. 10/014,509
Docket No. 383684/00

8

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in fees or to credit any overpayment in fees to Attorney's Deposit Account No. 50-0481.

Respectfully Submitted,

Date: 12/22/06

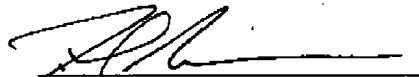


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CERTIFICATE OF FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that the foregoing Amendment was filed by facsimile with the United States Patent and Trademark Office, Examiner Fazli Erdem, Group Art Unit # 2826 at fax number 571-273-8300 this 22nd day of December, 2006.



Phillip E. Miller
Reg. No. 46,060